

# RECOGNITION OF STEPHEN AND LAURA ERDEL

• Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a couple that has had a tremendous impact on my hometown of Mexico, Missouri; my good friends Stephen and Laura Erdel. Mr. President, these two have served the community in a variety of roles and on January 22 they were the recipients of the Mexico Area Chamber of Commerce 1999 Community Service Award.

Steve has served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Handishop, Inc. the Handi-Shop Endowment Fund, the Mexico Rotary Club, The Mexico Country Club, The Arthur Center Advisory Board, Mexico/Audrain County Community Development, Enterprise Development Corporation, Audrain Medical Center Charitable Foundation, the Advanced Technology Center Foundation, the Westminster College Board of Trustees, Missouri Military Academy, the Alan Woods Scholarship Foundation, the Roy Creasey Scholarship Foundation and the Ross D. Ferris Scholarship.

He has served as president of the Mexico Area Chamber of Commerce and as vice president of Economic Development. He was also president of the following organizations: Handishop, Inc., Mexico Country Club, Arthur Center Advisory Board and as chairman of the Audrain Medical Center Charitable Foundation, the Advanced Technology Center Foundation and as their fundraising chairman. He is currently on the Westminster College Executive Committee.

Mr. President, Laura Erdel also has an outstanding record of community service. Laura served as a member of the Mexico Board of Education for 6½ years. In 1996 she was the first woman to be elected president of the school board. She was vice president of the board for four years and is certified by the Missouri School Board Association. For seven years she also served as a weekly volunteer at Eugene Field School.

Laura was co-founder of the A+ for Mexico Education, Inc. and president for two years. She has served as a board member of the Methodist Preschool and on various committees of the Eugene Field PTO, Mexico Junior High School PTA, and Mexico High School PTA.

As a member of the White family, long-time publishers of the Mexico Ledger, Laura has supported the Audrain Historical Society as publicity chairman for five years, and was co-chairman of the Audrain County Fair in 1990. She is currently a member of the Presser Hall Restoration Society and has served on their board of directors. She has been a strong supporter of the YMCA as a board member and has worked on numerous fund drives.

Laura is a former member of the Mexico Women's Club, a past president of the Wednesday Club and served as president of P.E.O. Chapter MB from 1989 to 1991 and again in 1998-99. Fur-

thermore, Laura was also the physician recruiter for Audrain Medical Center for ten years and has been a freelance reporter for the Mid-Missouri Business Journal.

Mr. President, it is people like this, who are willing to serve, that make our communities better places to live. I ask that my colleagues join me in recognition of Steve and Laura Erdel, who serve as an example to us all.●

## A TRIBUTE TO U.S. ATTORNEY MICHAEL SKINNER

• Mr. BREAUX. Mr. President, I wish to note the departure from public life of one of our state's most gifted public servants. Michael Skinner, who has served for the past six years as U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Louisiana, the largest geographical district in my home state, left office on January 15 and has returned to the private practice of law in Lafayette.

It is no exaggeration to say that Michael Skinner will be remembered as the most effective and successful U.S. Attorney in the history of the Western District of Louisiana. From almost his first day in office, he set about to make it clear to the people of his district that the U.S. Attorney's office was their office, administering justice on their behalf and for their benefit. In short order, he threw open the doors of his office, demystified the work of the U.S. Attorney and instilled a renewed sense of confidence and enthusiasm for the administration of justice in the Western District of Louisiana. Judges, attorneys, citizens and scores of public officials from Lafayette to Lake Charles to Alexandria to Shreveport to Monroe agreed that Michael Skinner's appointment was a true breath of fresh air.

Mr. Skinner's record as U.S. Attorney is an impressive one. He successfully prosecuted scores of cases involving public corruption, violent crime, drugs, health care and other types of program fraud, environmental crime and civil rights violations. Some of his most successful cases included: Food stamp and Medicaid/Medicare indictments and convictions that uncovered millions in fraud; a child pornography investigation that broke a child prostitution ring in South Louisiana; an environmental investigation that resulted in the cleanups of several south Louisiana toxic waste dumps; and the prosecution of literally hundreds of drug dealers who admitted or were convicted of selling drugs in Louisiana.

Mr. President, I am proud to have recommended Michael Skinner's nomination to President Clinton in 1993. In the years since his confirmation by this body, I have watched with a mixture of pride and admiration as he performed the duties of his office with a rare combination of skill, integrity, compassion and determination. Mike Skinner represents the best that our country has to offer in its public servants and I believe that he will serve as

the model for every person who follows him in that office. I know that I speak for the citizens of Louisiana and for every member of this body in thanking him for a job well done and in wishing he and his family all the best in this new phase of their lives.●

## IN MEMORY OF EMILY ANN JORDT

• Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the memory of an extraordinary and courageous young lady. Emily Ann Jordt, daughter of Bill and Deb Jordt of Hinton, Iowa, passed away on March 15, 1999, after fighting cancer for three years. My heart is heavy for the Jordt family. No one would disagree that cancer is a devastating illness. However, when cancer touches the life of a child, it seems an especially harsh reality. I know from personal experience the difficulties that follow a cancer diagnosis. My wife, Barbara, is a breast cancer survivor and we believe early detection saved her life. I have long supported biomedical research, and Emily's story reminds all of us the importance of remaining vigilant in providing funding for cancer research. To quote Emily, "We can do this together." It is my hope that by sharing Emily's story with my colleagues in the Senate, Emily's memory may be truly honored.

### EMILY'S STORY—A LIFE OF STRENGTH AND COURAGE

Emily was diagnosed with rhabdomyosarcoma, an aggressive childhood cancer, in 1996 when she was only nine years old. While this cancer is usually found in muscle tissue in an extremity, Emily's was in her jaw and neck. Emily was frightened. Her grandfather had died of lung cancer. Emily came to understand that there were many kinds of cancers, and that not everyone dies of this disease. Emily joined her family and doctors in what was to become a three-year fight for her life.

Emily had surgery to remove a tumor below her lower right jaw. Her best chance for remission was simultaneous radiation and chemotherapy treatment. Even though interruptions in the harsh protocol were needed for her body to recover, radiation was completed, and chemotherapy resumed.

After radiation Emily had difficulty with muscles of her tongue and throat. A feeding tube was surgically implanted and she used a suction machine to clear her throat and airways. She bravely adjusted to this life-style.

Emily dearly loved school. She maintained an A-B average throughout her illness. She played trumpet in the school band. When a facial nerve was impaired because of surgery, she switched to percussion and continued on. She served as a customer representative of the Westerner Bank in her school. She was an ardent fundraiser for school projects. Her classmates regarded her as a peacemaker.

Emily played soccer in a YMCA league throughout her treatment. She loved the sport. She was back on the soccer field and played most of a full game only 11 days after having major surgery to remove the tumor a second time.

Emily planned and presented a writer's workshop entitled "Getting through the Tough Stuff" where she encouraged young people her age to use writing as a vehicle to deal with the difficult challenges of life and be sensitive and caring to others.

Picture a nine-year-old presenting her concerns about and suggestions for pediatric